

THE RESURGENCE OF NAXALISM: IMPLICATIONS FOR INDIA'S SECURITY

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India is a millennium old civilisation, with one-sixth of humanity within its borders and 30 percent of the population living below the poverty line. It has led to huge economic disparities which create a feeling of deprivation and desperation among the unprivileged classes. The pluralistic Indian society is characterised by ethnic, religious, linguistic and socio-economic disparities which pose a serious threat to the internal security of the country. The Information Age has made globalisation a reality, where nations and societies are constantly creating wealth. Economic prosperity is only possible with sustained economic growth which demands a peaceful internal security environment. Naxalism or Left Wing Extremists (LWE) is an expression of the aspirations of the people who are deprived of a life of dignity and self-respect. The pattern of violence perpetuated by Naxalism is an indicator of an emerging serious challenge to the internal security and economic stability of the nation. This article introduces the polemics of Naxalism/LWE/Maoism and the prevailing situation which has seriously endangered the democratic fabric of the Indian states. An attempt has been made to contextualise the nature and spread of Naxalism/LWE and the threat it poses to the Indian states. The terms "Naxalites", "Maoists" and "Left Wing Extremists" have been used interchangeably. The article has

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been divided under the following sections: Genesis of the Problem; Naxal Strategy; Counter-Naxal Strategy; Measures and Recommendations; and Conclusion.

THE GENESIS OF THE PROBLEM

To understand the genesis of the Naxal movement, one has to study it within the framework of the Communist movement in India. The term “Naxalism” comes from Naxalbari¹, a small village in the Darjeeling district of West Bengal, where a section of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) [CPI(M)] led by Charu Majumdar and Kanu Sanyal led a violent uprising in 1967. They tried to develop a “revolutionary opposition” to the official CPI (M) leadership. On May 25, 1967, landlords attacked a tribal who was granted right to a piece of land by the court on the basis of tenancy rights. Revolutionary cadres of the CPI (M) counter attacked the landlord, giving rise to the “Naxalbari Uprising”. The uprising was spearheaded by Charu Mazumdar. Similarly, a peasant revolution was launched in an area called Srikakulam of Telengana region of Andhra Pradesh led by C. Pulla Reddy. Both incidents were violent in nature and drew their inspiration from the success of the Communist movements in China and Russia. The radicals comprehended the Indian situation then to be similar to that in China prior to 1949 and characterised it as essentially semi-colonial and semi-feudal. Based on that analysis, the revolutionaries concluded that the “People’s Democratic Revolution” should be launched in India by immediately resorting to an armed struggle on the Chinese lines.²

ROOT CAUSES

The roots of Naxalism or LWE date back to preindependence times. The Telangana movement in the Nizam’s Hyderabad and the movement in Bengal were the first of their kind in the 1940s. The main cause of the problem, when it began, was class and social inequality. In India, the people followed two distinct lines of thinking within the Communist movement.

1. V. Marwah, *India in Turmoil* (Rupa Publication, 2009), p. 98.

2. M. Manoranjan, *Revolutionary Violence: A Study of Maoist Movement in India* (New Delhi, 1977), p. 60.

The first line of thinking was propagated by Ranadive and his followers. They rejected the importance of the Chinese revolution and lay emphasis on the simultaneous accomplishment of a democratic and socialist revolution, based on city-based working class instructions. The second line of thinking drew lessons from the Chinese experiences, particularly Mao Tse Tung's theory of "protracted war", in building up the armed struggle.³

The following issues at the inception of the Naxal problem bring to fore the plight of the sufferers.

Zamindari System

The Zamindari system was adopted during the British Raj wherein a piece of land was given to a Zamindar and in return, he was required to pay a certain amount to the company or the state. The Zamindar did not cultivate the land himself. He distributed and redistributed it till it reached the tiller of the land who was a tribal or a common man working hard in the field. At each stage, the poor people or the tribals suffered immensely because a certain amount was required to be paid to the renter of the land and it led to the exploitation of the poor tribal at each stage.

Status of Tribals

The government decided to declare certain forests as reserved forests for the purposes of conservation, scientific research, for sanctuaries and land acquisition for dams, roads, industries, etc. It was done directly at the cost of the tribals who were the inhabitants of these forests for many generations. Thus, the state government, the contractors, and lower level officials fully exploited the tribals, bringing down their status to that of encroachers in the forests.

Resettlement and Rehabilitation

Unfortunately, in our country, the records of resettlement and rehabilitation and payment of compensation for lands and assets acquired from the people

3. R. Kujar, "Naxal Movement in India: A Profile", *IPSC Research Papers*, New Delhi, September 2008, p.2

for various purposes have been very poor. For certain poor families, it has meant generations of resettlement without being given any compensation. This has led to deprivation and marginalisation of the people. Although industrialisation did take place in the country, the tribals were deprived of the basic benefits of education and training. Therefore, they could not avail of new opportunities in the industries, and remained marginalised.

Administration in Remote Areas

Being very poor and unmonitored, these areas were developed but had poor connectivity. Even post-independence, the agrarian reforms did not reach these areas. Cosmetic solutions like *Bhoodan* and *Gramdan* were not effective. Corruption, vote bank politics and atrocities against the Scheduled Castes played havoc with the economic and social fabric of the society.

Governance Related Factors

The malfunctioning of government machinery in terms of inefficiency, corruption and exploitation was largely considered as the main factor behind the creation of a power vacuum as well as a space for Maoists to take root in and find legitimacy amongst the deprived and impoverished sections of the population in the country. The resurgence of LWE of such huge proportions was directly attributed to the failure of successive governments to address the aspirations of the common masses in the most deprived regions of the country. Since the demand of the poor people for change was not coming from the government, a natural recourse was to look for an alternative. The mass mobilisation has been possible only due to the inherent disenchantment with the prevalent system. The Naxals reached out to the people, understood them, took up their issues and fought for their dignity and rights.⁴ They earned goodwill among the tribals and the downtrodden.

It is of great interest to note that unlike the other internal security problems of the northeast, Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) and Punjab, which

4. T. Vijayendra "Kyon Naxalbari Andolan Jinda Raheja", in Veer Bharat Talwar, ed., *Naxalbari ke Daur Mein* (New Delhi, 2007), pp. 641-648.

were separatist in nature, LWE is **not** a separatist or externally driven movement. LWE believe that democracy is ill suited to India and want to make it a Communist type state. They have no respect for, or faith in, the Indian Constitution and the democratic system of government. They strongly believe in a classless society and consider rich capitalists, farmers and industrialists as their enemies. The aim is to overthrow the established government by using armed guerrilla rebellion along with agitation by the masses which in effect

means dictatorship by the proletariat. Globalisation and liberalisation are seen as challenges to socialism. Therefore, Maoist indoctrination affects such deprived sections the most.

It is common knowledge that in most Naxal-affected regions, there is total lack of governance. The civil administration departments like the police forces, revenue department, and judicial institutions are seldom heard of. This has allowed the Naxal forces to run a parallel government in these areas. The practice of holding *Jan Adalats*, land distribution, construction of irrigation facilities and tax collection by the Maoist cadres, are evidence of the lack of the hold of the state government, as also explain the reach of Naxalism

Socio-Economic Inequalities

These areas are severely affected by the disparities in economic and social terms. The rich Thakurs and Zamindars consider poor people and tribals as people with no dignity and, hence, socially exploit them. All kinds of social discrimination is practised against them. The females of the poor classes are treated as commodities to be used and exploited. These inequalities in society force them to take recourse to violence and join Naxalism.

Economically, there is a large gap between the haves and havenots. Lack of employment opportunities for the youth in the relatively deprived regions of the country further allows Naxal groups to recruit more and

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more people. Hence, the primary incentive to join the Naxals was to ensure an adequate income. The poverty levels in the Naxal affected states of Orissa, Bihar, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand are much higher (with more than 40 percent of the population living below the poverty line).

Safe Sanctuary

The Naxal areas stretch from Nepal to Tamil Nadu. The areas chosen by the Naxalites are far from the urban areas, and the terrain of the region, dominated by jungles, hills and riversides, suits their requirement. This obviously facilitates the task of the Naxalites and complicates the task for the security and police forces.

Financial Support

No organisation can survive without sound financial support and a source of regular income. By rough estimates, the CPI (M) generates approximately Rs 500- 700 crore annually. This money is spent on payment to its cadres, for the purchase of arms and ammunition, running of frontal organisations and institutions. The main sources of funds are wealthy industrialists who carry out mining in these areas. To finance their activities, the Naxalites “accept contributions” in the form of “taxes and levies”, loot government treasuries and banks and also extort vast amounts from businesses, industries, political leaders, government officials, rich landlords and professionals. The extremists live by the gun, reaping a rich harvest of extortion and tax collection, with revenues to the tune of Rs.1,000 crore a year.⁵ The quantum of collection varies from state to state. As per estimates, the total collection from Bihar and Chhattisgarh is around Rs 200 crore and Rs. 150 crore respectively,⁶ while that from Jharkhand and Andhra Pradesh is about Rs. 350 crore and Rs. 100 crore respectively.⁷ In addition, the Naxalites are also engaged in, or control, significant levels of illegal economic activity,

5. *The Economic Times*, April 9, 2008.

6. *Ibid.*

7. R.K. Bhonsle, “An Integrated Strategy”, *Yojana*, February, 2007, p. 32.

especially harvesting and smuggling of forest produce. Smuggling of *tendu* leaves and other forest products such as opium and *kattha* also adds to their coffers.⁸

ORGANISATIONS

PWG (People's War Group)

If today, Naxalism is considered as the greatest internal security problem and the Naxals claim to be running a parallel government, the credit mostly goes to the PWG.⁹ The PWG has declared that India is a vast 'semi-colonial' and 'semi-feudal' country, with about 80 percent of the population residing in villages. It is ruled by the big landlord classes, similar to imperialism.¹⁰ People's war is based on armed agrarian revolution which is the only path for achieving people's democracy i.e. new democracy in our country.¹¹

MCCI (Maoist Communist Centre (India))

Right from the beginning, the MCC resorted to armed struggle as the main form of resistance and waged a protracted guerrilla war as the central task of the organisation.¹² The concrete economic and political conditions of India led to the concept of Mao Tse Tung's philosophy of war, i.e. to establish a powerful people's army and dependable, strong and self-sufficient base areas in the countryside, to constantly consolidate and expand the people's army and the base areas in order to encircle the urban areas from the countryside by liberating the countryside, and, finally, to capture the cities and establish the state system and political authority of the people themselves by decisively destroying the state power of the reactionaries.¹³

8. *The Hindu*, March 23, 2008.

9. *30 Years of Naxalbari*, undated Maoist literature (Vanguard, Publication), p. 30.

10. Kutjur, n. 3, p. 7.

11. "Path of People's War in India – Our Tasks", a comprehensive PWG party document highlighting its aims, objectives and strategies. See also D.R. Kaarthikeyan, in P.C. Dogra, ed., *Naxalite Movement* (New Delhi, 2004), p.187.

12. See A.A. Cohen, *The Communism of Mao Tse Tung*, p. 188.

13. *Red Star*, Special Issue, p. 20, as quoted in A. Banerjee, "Inside MCC Country" dated June 2003.

Formation of CPI Maoist

After the merger of the CPML with the PWG and MCCI into the CPI (Maoist) in September 2004, there were reports that they were trying to woo other splinter groups and had also consolidated their front organisations into a “Revolutionary Democratic Front” (RDF) to intensify their mass contact programme. A press release issued by the General Secretary on October 14, 2004, stated that unity was aimed to give more importance to the cause of “Revolution in India”. The new party has pledged to work in close collaboration with the Communist Party of Nepal [CPN (Maoist)], which is now in power in the Himalayan Kingdom of Nepal. Two guerrilla armies of the PWG and MCCI i.e, the People’s Guerrilla Army (PGA) and the People’s Guerrilla Liberation Army (PGLA) respectively, have also been merged. The combined strength is called the People’s Liberation Guerrilla Army (PLGA) from December 2004 onward.

LINKAGES: NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL

Recent studies say that the Naxals have well established linkages with other insurgent groups and few Muslim Fundamental Organisations (MFOs) which are actively involved in India. These links provide the movement with not only psychological support, but also material support in the form of money and weapons.

J&K Terrorist Groups

Naxalite spokespersons, on many occasions, have openly supported the actions and cause of the J&K terrorist groups. The Lakshkar-e-Tayyeba (LeT) terrorists who carried out the attack on the American Centre at Kolkata in 2001 had escaped to Jharkhand and took refuge in a Naxalite sympathiser’s house in Ranchi. In return of this and similar other favours, the J&K terrorist who are well trained in handling sophisticated arms, impart training to the Naxalite groups.

Northeast Insurgent Groups

Intelligence agencies have been reporting linkages between Maoist elements

and the insurgent groups of the northeast i.e. the United Liberation Front of Assam, Nationalist Socialist Council of Nagaland, and People's Liberation Army (ULFA, NSCN, PLA). The northeast insurgent groups like the PLA and NSCN follow the Maoist ideology and were even trained and supported by China in the 1960s and 1970s.

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Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI)

It has emerged that the Naxals have openly supported the activities of SIMI and both have been lately collaborating with each other.

Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist)

Naxalite groups in India have tried to sustain their fraternal and logistic links with Nepal's Maoists. The LWE outfits of India, along with CPN (Maoist) have decided to work towards carving out a "Compact Revolutionary Zone". The Indian LWE groups have been extending moral, material and training support to CPN (Maoist) cadres in guerrilla warfare, which has resulted in significant growth of Naxal violence since 2001. Cooperation between Maoists active in Nepal through Bihar, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, up to Andhra Pradesh, has provided the left wing extremists contiguous areas in which to operate, move, hide and train.

Coordination Committee of the Maoist Parties of South Asia (CCOMPOSA)

The Maoist groups of four South Asian countries, India, Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, have joined hands to form CCOMPOSA to advance "People's War" in South Asia. The objective of the Committee is to unify and coordinate the activities of the Maoists parties and organisations in South Asia and spread protracted People's War in the region.¹⁴

14. See R. Kujur, "CCOMPOSA: A Mirage or Realty", October 31, 2006, at www.ipcs.com.

ISI Links

The Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) has been very active in Nepal and Bangladesh for long, especially along the borders, in their desire to encircle India and is giving support to numerous Indian militant groups based in Bangladesh. The rise of LWE groups in India and Nepal has further served their purpose and they do not hesitate in providing moral and material support to these groups. This bond has been mutually beneficial to both the parties, as the LWE receive weapons and other war-like stores from the ISI to be used against the Indian states.

LTTE Links

The Naxalite linkage with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) dates back to the 1990s when it was estimated by the intelligence agencies that the PWG used to acquire weapons, especially AK-47 rifles, from this organisation.¹⁵ In the present context, the Naxalites are actively involved in Tamil Nadu with the discovery of a training camp organised by former PWG Naxals in the Periyakulum forests, Theni district, which is also believed to have strong sympathy for the LTTE. It has led security agencies to suspect a renewed nexus between the Naxals and the LTTE.¹⁶

Revolutionary International Movement

The PWG maintains constant touch with the Maoist groups of 27 countries through the Revolutionary International Movement.¹⁷ A Turkish Maoist organisation is known to have undertaken the task of publishing PWG activities through an Internet website.

Linkage with Left Wing Philippines Groups

A few media and intelligence reports from Southeast Asia state that the Naxalites in India have also developed links with the left wing extremists

15. P. Singh, *The Naxalite Movement in India* (Ruby and Company, 1995), p. 114.

16. D. Srivastava, "Naxalite -LTTE Nexus in Tamil Nadu: An Alliance in the Making", August 14, 2007, at www.ipcs.com.

17. P.V. Ramana, "PWG's Emerging New Global Linkages", February 11, 2004, PWG's www.ipcs.com.

of the Philippines, and through them, with other groups of Southeast Asia. The increasing expansion of Naxalism got further strengthened with covert support from other groups with a similar ideology in the Indian subcontinent. India's 'all weather adversary' Pakistan has grasped the opportunity provided by Naxalism to further increase unrest in Indians and try to re-emphasise its dictum of 'bleeding India by thousand cuts'.

NAXAL STRATEGY AND TACTICS

Organisational Strength of the Extremist Groups

The consolidation of several sections of the Naxalites has been responsible for the organised, institutionalised and planned manner in which the Naxalites function. The ideological dedication, the cadre-based organisational set-up and understanding of the micro socio-economic situation in various regions of India makes the extremists plan, operate and implement their strategies efficiently. There is a Central Committee and a Politburo at the apex. The hierarchical structure, which flows from the Regional Bureaus—State Committee/Special Zone Committee—Zone and Sub-Zone District/Division Committee—Squad Area Committee, is well established and institutionalised. The armed wing has a few divisions and *dalams*. At the village level, they have units called “**Sanghams**” comprising ideologically committed active supporters.

Protracted War

The Naxalites have adopted the strategy of “protracted war”. The aim is to capture political power by armed struggle as a prelude to the subsequent unification of the liberated areas. The armed struggle has no time limit. It can attain the goal in one or 10 or 20 years and, in this way, the struggle moves ahead. Recently, the Naxalite groups have laid greater focus on organising along military lines. The military wing has based its ideology on guerrilla warfare. They have resorted to well conceived, thoroughly planned and ably executed sensational actions such as the attack on the convoy of Mr. Chandra Babu Naidu, the then Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, the

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forced release of prisoners from the prisons at Jehanabad (Bihar), Narayangarh (Orissa), police stations in Chhattisgarh and Silda (West Bengal) and the recent spurt in hijacking of trains in Bihar and Jharkhand.

Building up Bases/Guerrilla Zones

In order to fulfill the aim of protracted war, the Naxalites believe in building up both physical and mass bases. Initially, the bases are built up in rural and remote areas. The areas are, then, to be developed into "Guerrilla Zones" and ultimately into "Liberated Areas". Naxalites operate in the very heartland of India, known as the Dandakaryna region (named after a mythological region from the epic *Ramayana*) which spreads over Chhattisgarh, Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh. The heart of this region is the thickly forested area of Abhujmadh which is approximately 10,000 sq km. This area till date has not been surveyed by the Government of India. The Naxalites treat it as a totally liberated area.

Compact Revolutionary Zone (CRZ)

The Naxalites, with the support of their Nepal counterpart, plan to create a 'Red Corridor', starting from the Nepal border with Nepal and extending upto Kerala. It was in August 2001 that the idea came up of establishing a Compact Revolutionary Zone (CRZ) or the Red Corridor. It extended from the forest tracts of Adilabad (Andhra Pradesh) to Nepal, traversing the forest areas of Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Bihar and Nepal. It was conceptualised at Siliguri in a high-level meeting of the Maoist leaders. The notion of CRZ seems to be working in the correct direction. There has been a remarkable growth in Maoist between 2001 and 2010 in India.

Training

The LWE affected areas being underdeveloped and forested, safe joint

training camps can be organised. It has been reported that some Nepal Maoists have been possibly trained in the West Champaran and Aurangabad districts of Bihar, and Palamau and Kodarma districts of Jharkhand. Also CPI -ML and PWG cadres are imparting specialist training to the Maoists of Nepal in Rolpa and Rukum districts of Nepal. On this basis, they attack the enemy's outposts. An uncorroborated media input reveals that an attack on a police outpost in the West Champaran district on July 16, 2004, was carried out jointly by Indian and Nepalese groups. The attack on a police post in Madhubani in North Bihar in June 2005 is also reported to be a joint operation.

Tactics

To obtain their strategic, objectives, the Naxalites have been very ruthless in their approach. The following methods highlight their tactics to achieve their goals.

Enhance Public Support and Mass Base: The failure of the Naxalbari movement in the initial stages led the Naxalite leaders to rely solely on the people and create a powerful mass base.¹⁸ Therefore, now, the Naxals' aim is to enlarge their mass/support base by undertaking development work and garnering the support of the civil liberty groups. In addition, they indulge in rendering instant justice through 'Jan Adalats'. While the movement has strengthened itself in the forest areas and in areas marked by lack of governance, the Maoist leadership feels that urban centres have remained untouched. Therefore, in a meeting held in January 2007, the Central Committee formed a five-member Urban Sub-Committee and entrusted it with the task of preparing an Urban Perspective Document.¹⁹

Jan Adalats: Naxalites hold 'Jan Adalats' to dispose of the criminal and civil cases and, then, dispense justice by settlement of disputes and punishing the offenders. For this, the PWG has introduced a new 'Judicial System' by forming the 'People's Court', i.e., the Gram Rajya Committee and subsequently 'Revolutionary People's Committee', as an alternate

18. Singh, n. 15, p. 11.

19. K. Srinivas, "Reddy, Maoists to Focus on Urban Centre", *The Hindu*.

judicial system. The 'Judicial Department' i.e. 'Sangham' comprising three to five members with a 'People's Protection Squad' at its disposal, delivers judgments and sentences, including fines and imprisonment in a temporary designated lock-up in the village, apart from awarding capital punishment. The Dandakaranya Adivasi Mazdoor Kisan Sangh (DAKMS) and the Krantikari Adivasi Mahila Sanghatan (KAMS) are two specific Naxal front organisations that are entrusted with the task of looking into all disputes.²⁰

Present Domain of Naxalism/LWE

The exponential spread of Naxal influence has now engulfed 231 districts/20 states as compared to 182 districts/16 states earlier, which indeed gives a pan-India hue to the Naxal movement. The Naxals' consolidation along the axis of the projected 'Red Corridor' or the 'Compact Revolutionary Zone' (CRZ) highlights the long-term objectives of the outfit. The Naxals' aim is to upgrade their armed wing from a 'Guerrilla Force' to a regular 'People's Army'.

Major Developments

Change in Strategy: To accomplish its central task i.e., seizure of political power through protracted People's War, the party in its recently held Congress, reviewed the stage of the revolution and decided to review its strategy in the military-organisational-politico/perception management arenas. The CPI (Maoist) has chalked out elaborate plans to expand and consolidate its area of influence in Jharkhand. The CPI (Maoist) is actively pursuing its strategy of upgrading 'guerrilla warfare' into 'mob warfare' with a view to increase its influence in the states of Bihar, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh. On the military front, the outfit has resolved to raise the level of the war and spread the revolution to new areas. It is fought by concentrating forces from various locations, with fluid battlefront developments and having the requisite training and mobility to attack the enemy in its most vulnerable areas, followed by speedy withdrawal. For this purpose, it

20. Ministry of Home Affairs, Annual Report, 2008-09.

has also decided to provide better weaponry to its army and also arm its 'Jan Militia'.²¹ The ultimate objective is to convert the People's Liberation Guerrilla Army (PLGA) into a regular People's Liberation Army (PLA) capable of undertaking the highest form of 'positional warfare', wherein the Naxal forces would capture territories, enforce the tenets of Maoism and liberate them from the yoke of imperialistic forces. In this endeavour, the CPI (Maoist) plans to convert its Guerrilla Zones into Base Areas, in its traditional strongholds, where the Maoists would dominate and provide a parallel administration to the local population. Consequently, the party focussed its efforts to strengthen the armed wings in Bihar, Jharkhand, Orissa and the Bastar region of Chhattisgarh. Ultimately, it is planned to liberate the backward areas of Central and Eastern India, specially Dandakaranya, Bihar, Orissa and Jharkhand.

The outfit also undertook regular launching of limited campaigns termed as 'Tactical Counter-Offensive Campaigns' (TCOCs) against the security forces, to deter them and put them on the back foot.

CPI (Maoist) Formulates Financial Policy: The Central Committee (CC) of the party has formulated a new financial policy to ensure proper collection, allotment and dissemination of funds. The objective of the policy is to streamline the system of collection of funds and check diversion and unnecessary expenditure. The new policy incorporates a top-down model of allocation of funds from the Central Committee to lower level committees, unlike the erstwhile system of retention of a major share of funds at the lower level, whilst leaving approximately 20 percent funds for the Central Committee. As per the policy, a higher level committee would now earmark the budgetary allocation of each lower level committee in the party hierarchy and the expenditure incurred would be strictly on the basis of budgetary allocations. It is estimated that the CPI (Maoist) in 2007 collected at least Rs. 40 crore from the states of Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Punjab and UP. The Central Military Commission (CMC) had a budget in 2007-09 of approximately Rs. 60 crore, including Rs. 10 crore earmarked for the Central

21. Marwah, n. 1, p. 69.

Technical Committee, Rs 5 crore for communication, Rs 2 crore for the maintenance of hideouts and Rs 70 lakh for the purchase of weapons.

Alternate Red Corridor: The CPI (Maoist) plans to establish its presence in the Western Ghats, between Raigarh district of Maharashtra in the north and Wayanad district of Kerala in the south, with Karnataka as its base. The outfit's plan to use the Western Ghats, straddling the states of Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka and Kerala, is primarily aimed at creating another Compact Revolutionary Zone (CRZ) analogous to the main one along the eastern corridor of the country. It has set a 3-4 years timeframe to achieve this objective. The main objective of the CPI (Maoist) is to establish strategic and tactical bases, which could provide safe sanctuary from the security forces' action and an alternative to the existing CRZ. This has led the CPI (Maoist) to undertake a major revamping drive since the beginning of the 21st century. So far, in 2011, 2,633 recruits have reportedly joined the PLGA in comparison to approximately 900 recruits in 2006. The outfit has organised 34 training camps in 2011 as compared to 13 in 2010.

COUNTERING NAXAL STRATEGY

There is a need to have a holistic view of this problem before it engulfs the entire country and results in endangering national security. This part can be covered under two sections: measures already undertaken by the central and state governments and recommended measures.

Measures Undertaken by the Central and State Governments

The governments have taken the following measures to control the Naxal problems:

Modernisations of State Police: Funds are given to the states under the Police Modernisation Scheme to modernise their police forces in terms of modern weaponry, latest communication equipment, mobility and other infrastructure. The Naxal affected states have also been asked to identify vulnerable police stations and outposts in the Naxal areas and take up their fortification under the scheme. However, some of the states need to improve the level of utilisation of funds under the scheme. So far, the central

government has released an amount of Rs 3677.67 crore to the Naxal affected states viz. Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Uttarakhand, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Karnataka. Within this, Rs133 crore were provided to the Naxal affected states for demining units, sophisticated weaponry and the latest telecommunication equipment.²²

Special Training of Police: Specialised training of the state police in guerrilla warfare and such operations under central arrangements are being undertaken. The personnel are being trained in specialised camps set up by the army in Bihar, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh and other places to fight terrorism and dealing with Improvised Explosive Devices (IED). The Army is training this force in counter-insurgency operations to include identification of IEDs, disposal of bombs, and use of detectors and jammers.

Special Intelligence Structure: The Naxal-affected states have taken the necessary steps to set up/streamline the intelligence structure²³ to effectively deal with the Naxal problem. Besides, it has been recognised that police station level collection of actionable intelligence holds the key to preventing Naxal violence. The Naxal-affected states have, accordingly, been asked to further streamline the intelligence collection and sharing mechanism between different agencies operating at the ground level so as to undertake intelligence driven anti-Naxal operations.²⁴

Inter-State Joint Anti-Naxal Operations: The menace of Naxalism is an inter-state problem. Naxalites operate without any hindrance of political and physical boundaries. In order to overcome the problem of inter-state movements by security forces, joint operations by the Special Police Units of the neighbouring states were required to be institutionalised, which has since been done in the form of "Operation Green Hunt". This is a well coordinated joint operation by the state police forces, adequately supported by the central forces, less army. In addition to this, air support is being given to the states and hiring charges for helicopters are also being reimbursed by the central government under SRE.

22. Ministry of Home Affairs, Annual Report 2008-09.

23. Marwah, n. 1, p. 91.

24. Ministry of Home Affairs.

Long-Term Deployment of Central Paramilitary Forces: In order to supplement the efforts of the states in providing an effective response to the Naxal violence, 40 battalions of the Central Paramilitary Forces have been deployed on a long-term basis, as requested by the affected states. The central government had also exempted the states from the payment of the cost of deployment of these forces for a period of three years from July 1, 2004, involving an amount of nearly Rs. 1,100 crore. In addition, as many as 52 companies of the Provincial Armed Constabulary (PAC) have been trained to carry out anti-Naxal tasks.²⁵

India Reserve Battalions: The Naxal affected states have been sanctioned 29 India Reserve Battalions mainly to strengthen the security apparatus at their level and also enable the states to provide gainful employment to the youth, particularly in the Naxal areas. Recently, additional India Reserve Battalions have also been approved for the Naxal affected states. The central government has now provided Rs. 20.75 crore per India Reserve Battalion as against the earlier amount of Rs. 13 crore per battalion. The states have been asked to expedite the raising of these battalions as soon as possible

Deployment of Seema Suraksha Bal (SSB) Along Indo-Nepal Border: In order to contain the activities of Nepalese Maoists on Indian territory, the SSB has been given the responsibility to protect the Indo-Nepal border. The government has recently given more powers to the SSB so that the management of the borders in these areas can be improved. For this, an outlay of Rs. 444 crore has been sanctioned for the SSB.

Protection of Railway Infrastructure: Generally, the Naxalite groups target properties. Hence, the Naxal affected states have been asked to set up credible mechanisms to enable effective coordination on the ground among the Railway Protection Force (RPF), Government Railway Police (GRP), local police and intelligence agencies to ensure the protection and safety of railway passengers, railway tracks and other railway properties. Besides, the Railway Ministry has also taken the necessary steps to further strengthen the infrastructure for improvement of the safety and security of the railways.²⁶

25. [http://www,what is India.com](http://www.what is India.com)

26. Ministry of Home Affairs, Annual Report, 2006-07.

Backward Districts Initiative (BDI): Since the Naxalite threat has to be seen on the developmental front also, the central government has provided financial assistance of Rs. 2,475 crore for 55 Naxal affected districts in the 9 states of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Orissa, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal under the BDI component of the Rashtriya Sam Vikas Yojana (RSVY).²⁷ The Planning Commission has been requested to include other Naxal affected areas under their proposed Scheme of Backward Regions Grant Funds (BRGF) for which there has been an outlay of Rs. 5,000 crore from fiscal year 2005-06 onwards.

Tribal and Forest Related Issues: In order to address the areas of disaffection among the tribals, the government introduced the Scheduled Tribes (Recognition of Forest Rights) Bill, 2005, in Parliament on December 13, 2005. Further, to facilitate social and physical infrastructure in the forest areas, the Ministry of Environment and Forests, issued general approval to allow such infrastructure by utilising up to one hectare of forest land for non-forest purposes. In August 2010, the government had decided to take the following actions: Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation Act) was recommended to empowered Groups of Ministers; reduce rising protest against mining as no development is likely to take place; companies to share the equity/profit with the locals; payment of environmental levy; companies to shell out 26 percent of their equity; and individuals to share 26 percent of their profit.

Effective Implementation of Land Reforms and Creation of Employment Opportunity in the Naxal Affected Areas: Naxal groups have been raising mainly land and livelihood related issues. If land reforms are taken up on a priority basis and the landless and poor in the Naxal areas are allotted the surplus land, this would go a long way in tackling the developmental aspects of the Naxal problem. The states have been requested to focus greater attention on this area as also to speed up developmental activities and create employment opportunities in the Naxal affected areas, with special focus on the creation of physical

27. Ibid.

infrastructure in terms of roads, communication, power as also social infrastructure such as schools, hospitals, etc.

Public Perception Management: The states have been advised to resort to publicity campaigns in order to expose the unlawful activities and misdeeds of Naxal outfits and their leaders, use of violence and armed struggle, loss of human life and property and absence of development activities in the affected areas due to fear of, and extortion by, Naxal cadres, etc. The central government has taken the following measure to check the Naxal threat:

Firstly, a Task Force was constituted on October 7, 2004, under the Chairman of Special Internal Security (IS). It deliberates upon the steps needed to deal with Naxalism more effectively and in a coordinated manner. The members of the Task Force comprise nodal officers of the Naxal-affected states namely, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal and the representatives of the Intelligence Bureau (IB), Central Reserve Police force (CRPF) and SSB. The Inspector General (IG) (Ops) CRPF and IG (Ops) SSB also participate in the deliberations. The Task Force has provided a useful forum to discuss and streamline anti-Naxalite operations being carried out by the affected states.²⁸

Secondly, keeping in view the overall dimensions of the Naxalite activities, a high level Coordination Centre was set up in 1998, headed by the Union Home Secretary, with the Chief Secretaries and Director Generals of Police (DGsP) of the Naxal affected states as its members. They meet regularly and review and coordinate steps, taken by the state to control Naxalite activities.

In addition to this, the decision was taken in the Chief Minister's Conference on Internal Security and Law and Order, held on April 15, 2005, to constitute a Standing Committee under the chairmanship of the Union Home Minister, with the Chief Ministers of 13 Naxal-affected states as its members. The government has also constituted an Inter-Ministerial Group (IMG). The IMG has members drawn from the developmental ministries and

28. Ibid.

the objective is to ensure effective implementation of developmental programmes in the Naxal affected areas.

RECOMMENDED MEASURES

The government must build-up political pressure to tackle this serious internal security problem.

Political Measures

The government must build-up political pressure to tackle this serious internal security problem based on the following recommendations. The government must initiate diplomatic measures to enlist the support of the neighbouring countries to deny cooperation between Naxal organisations. Legislative back-up, statutory actions, banning of unlawful organisations and setting up of a coordination centre to deal with Naxal extremism must be formed on the basis of the government response to the challenge posed to internal security. The left groups must be invited to join the political process. Examples are those of the CPI, CPI (M), All India Forward Bloc (AIFB) earlier and, recently, the CPI (ML) that have joined the political process successfully. Then, there is a need for all political parties to have a united stand in dealing with the problem.

Socio-Economic Measures

The central and eastern parts of the country are relatively underdeveloped as compared to other parts of India, both industrially and agriculturally. The areas also lag behind in almost all human development indicators. Hence, efforts must be made by the government to tackle the disparities in the social system on a war-footing. The government must take immediate steps to eliminate poverty, ensure speedy development and enforce law and order strictly. This could be made more effective by central plans with liberal central financial assistance which the government is doing.

Psychological Initiatives

In order to enlist the support of the people the government must rely on psychological warfare. Here, the government must expose the weakness

in the Naxals' ideological framework. Then, restoration of people's faith in the government and efficient use of the mass media to highlight the use of extreme violence by the Naxals and the loss of human life and property are other key areas in the government's strategy. People should be made aware of the diminishing role of Communism, as in the collapse of Communism in the USSR. Knowledge should be imparted that Communism deals with the materialistic aspects of life only, whereas the Indian culture does not advocate materialism. The leadership of Naxalism is in the hands of the upper class, whereas the cadres belong to the lower classes. There should be realisation among the masses that India believes in the concept of non-violence. Socialism can be achieved peacefully through the democratic process. It should be noted that many South American and South Asian countries have not progressed despite strong leftist movements. In the age of globalisation, applying the Maoists' strategy is not so relevant for India. In any case, China is more capitalistic than India. Furthermore, an attractive and all encompassing surrender-cum-rehabilitation policy will have a great psychological effect on the Naxals who seem far removed from their ideology. Giving relief to victims will show the human face of the government

Involvement of Armed Forces

A variety of options exist to tackle the security scenario as a separate entity, i.e. either by involvement of only the police or police and central paramilitary forces or involvement of the Indian armed forces in a limited capacity. There are various repercussions of the involvement of the armed forces to be considered before deciding on an option. It is a must that all pros and cons are considered in totality.

Today, the armed forces are heavily committed to fulfill both their primary and secondary tasks. On the one hand, heavy deployment of the Army along with various other paramilitary forces, continues at the borders to thwart the nefarious designs of our staunch adversary and, on the other, the Indian Army, along with some component of the Indian Air Force and a very miniscule portion of the Indian Navy is busy fighting a prolonged proxy war in Jammu and Kashmir and controlling insurgency

with all its undying efforts in northeastern India. 'Aid to Civil Authorities' is another major aspect of the involvement of the Indian armed forces in the case of disasters and unrest. Today, India is progressing well to further its vision to become a world power, showcasing its capabilities and participating in restoring world order and peace by participation in United Nations Peace-Keeping Missions. At present, the armed forces have a very limited involvement in counter-Naxal operations. This indirect participation involves: the training police and CPOs in Army run Jungle Warfare Schools in guerrilla warfare and also to train companies of the state police and assist in operations by sharing intelligence gathered by unmanned aerial vehicles operating in the area.

The government must constitute an apex central body which will coordinate/counter Naxalism/LWE measures in all affected states.

Application of Forces

The state governments realise that Naxalism is a 'law and order problem' that must be dealt with firmly. The government must constitute an apex central body which will coordinate/counter Naxalism/LWE measures in all affected states. Simultaneously, each state should set up a dedicated anti-Naxal force under capable officers with fixed tenures of 2-3 years, on the pattern of the 'Greyhounds' of Andhra Pradesh. The Directors General of Police (DGsP) of the Naxal-affected states should share information. The Prime Minister, in his remarks on internal security at the Chief Ministers Conference on September 5, 2006, had emphasised that the real key to check the Naxalites is good and timely intelligence. For launching successful counter LWE operations, adequate intelligence is essential which must be systematic and oriented. Efficient intelligence sharing between Multi-Action Teams (MAC) and State Multi-Action Teams (SMAC) is a must. The most important factor, however, remains effective integration of strategic and tactical intelligence and information gathered at the police station level. While the overall counter-action by the affected states in terms of Naxalites killed, arrested, surrendered and arms recovered from them has shown

much better results in the last two to three years, there is an urgent need to further improve and strengthen the police response, particularly in the states of Bihar, Jharkhand, Orissa, Maharashtra, by improving and sharing actionable mechanisms and strengthening the police forces. The same goes for the states of Andhra Pradesh and Chhattisgarh to some extent, which need to sustain their present momentum of effective counter-action against the Naxalites and their infrastructure.²⁹ The police force as a whole needs to be increased and fast. The irony of the situation is such that the national average of the police-public ratio is about 1.3 policemen per 10,000 citizens, yet in Bihar, a Naxal-prone state, the ratio of policemen to the public per 10,000 is a meagre 0.9, i.e. hardly one policeman for 10,000 people. Hence, there is urgent need to take corrective measures.

CONCLUSION

Today, there is no immediate solution to the Naxal problem. It will take time for the affected areas to normalise. The first priority should be to contain the tide of Maoist expansion and reinforce the writ of the law in the affected states. Adequate security should be assured in the affected regions first, then, development can follow. The maintenance of law and order is the responsibility and prerogative of the state and not of the citizens. The option of vigilant groups should be done away with. This can have adverse effects in the long-term. It is time to undertake administrative, electoral and judicial reforms to make the government machinery professional, accountable and proactive. There will never be a meeting ground between the state and the Naxals, as the ultimate objective of the latter is to uproot the former. Therefore, the government should not waste time and energy at the negotiating table and must stick to its policy of no talks until the Naxals lay down arms. The experience of the Army could be harnessed in imparting training, providing logistical support, medical services and technical equipment and expertise to the paramilitary forces that are deployed in Naxal affected areas.

29. Status Paper on Problem of LWE in India tabled by Union Home Minister Shivraj Patil, in Parliament on March 3, 2006.

Thus, the need of the day is to strengthen the civil administration and security forces i.e. the police and other paramilitary forces operating in the area to smoothen the transition of the situation towards normalcy and with the involvement of the local populace. This is a more desirable option.

The need to create an adequate security environment, especially in the districts where the Naxalites are said to run a parallel government, is a must. In areas where there is only a thin presence on Naxalites, developmental initiatives could be undertaken alongside. Once an adequate security environment and the rule of law are reinstalled, large scale developmental measures, with maximum accountability and efficiency need to be undertaken.